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The Muslim Voice

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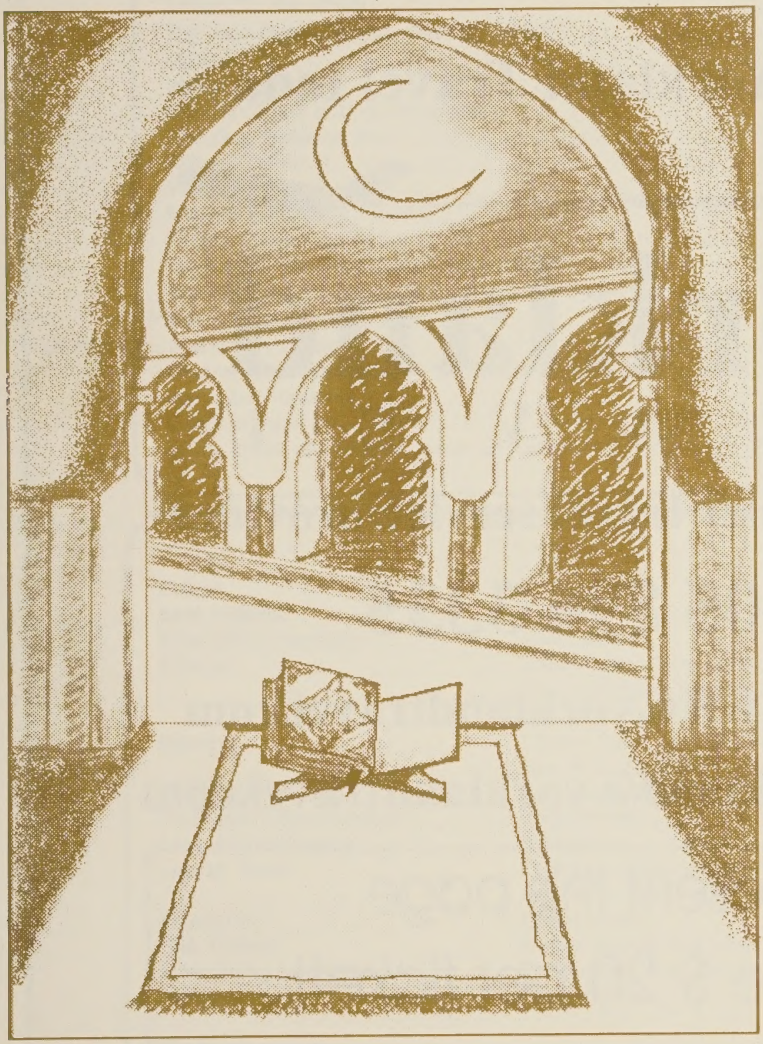
DECEMBER 2001 VOLUME 8 ISSUE 3 RAMADAN 1422



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RAMADAN KAREEM AND EID MUBARAK TO EVERYONE
ON BEHALF OF *THE MUSLIM VOICE*!

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Cover sketch done by Abeer Choudhury, University of Toronto (St. George)
The Muslim Voice Logo designed by Abeer Choudhury, University of Toronto (St. George)

President's Message

Bismillah Ir-rahman Ar-Raheem
Alhamdulillah, wassalatu wassalamu 'ala Rasulillah,
Assalamu Alaikum Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is timely for me to say how proud I am of many brothers and sisters on campus! The reason for this is their effort and devotion to voluntary work to improve our community on campus. *Alhamdulillah*, the lecture organized on Friday November 9th, by the MSA "Da'wah Initiative Group," was a great success! *Masha'Allah!* The speaker, Dr. Jamal Badawi, gave a very informative and enlightening presentation entitled "The Islamic Belief System: Myth and Reality". The attendees, many of whom were non-Muslim, expressed their enjoyment of the lecture and felt that it clarified many misconceptions about Islam. In the six years I have been here on campus, I do not recall an event that attracted so many non-Muslims. I may be mistaken; it may simply be that nothing on the scale of Sept. 11th has happened in North America during this time to cause the media to focus so much attention on Islam, and the general public to become so curious about the meaning of this beautiful deen. However, it goes without saying that the work done by everyone who helped out in any way with this event was exceptional and Allah (SWT) has rendered it fruitful through the event's success. The following verse comes to mind:

"Verily, never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)..."
[Quran, The Thunder:11]

It is Allah (SWT) who guides and it is He who leads astray. It is also Allah (SWT) who gives *barakah* and blessings in one's work and makes it succeed. However, that does not mean we can sit back and expect that since Allah (SWT) is in control of everything and since everything goes according to His will, that there is nothing we can do to make things better.

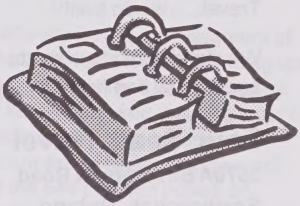
Allah (SWT) clearly states that we must strive for change and the triumphs with which we will be rewarded. If we do this with sincere intentions then that is all that Allah (SWT) asks of us. The rest is up to Him. If He (SWT) wills then some of the non-Muslims that attended the aforementioned event will embrace Islam and Muslims that were present will have improved their insight into what Islam truly stands for. We must keep striving, renew our intentions, and evaluate our actions continually so that Allah (SWT) may endow us with what is greater, *insha'Allah*.

I will also mention my gratitude and appreciation to all the other volunteers in the IAW, the Profac, the Community Affairs committees, and to all the TMV staff for investing their time to improve our surroundings, for ourselves and future generations, as well as the community at large. I would also like to thank the MSA executive for their hard work and commitment in pulling together our resources during these stressful times. Jazakum Allahu Khayrun to everyone!

Finally, all praise is due to Allah (SWT) for giving us the strength and courage to pursue these immensely important duties. May He (SWT) give us the wisdom to remain poised to continue to bring about positive change in our community while attaining excellence in our studies. May He (SWT) purify our intentions, give us *barakah* for our work, and show us the fruits of our labour in this life and the next *insha'Allah, Allahumma Ameen*.

Wassalamu Alaikum,
Ahmed Abdelkhalek

Message from The Muslim Voice



In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful
Assalam Alaikum (peace be unto) all readers of *The Muslim Voice,*

Over the past 8 years of TMV's existence, we have grown from a student run newsletter with a circulation of a few hundred to a full fledged magazine with a circulation that will approach 1,000 copies by the end of this academic year, insh'Allah. This, however, would not have been possible had it not been for the enthusiasm of our readers spread across several campuses in Toronto and others parts of Ontario, and also the hard work of our staff. And with the launch of our website (tmv.ca) in May 2000, our online readership continues to grow at a faster pace than we had anticipated, adding an additional 1000+ readers per month. However, these are all numbers and the significance of our work lies in the impact this magazine has had on the Muslim and non-Muslim campus community.

Recent events have underscored, more than ever before, the importance of effective communication between our community and other members of our society. This is why it is important for members of the Muslim campus community to write. Whether it is creative expression or intellectual discourse, all such works depict a positive image of Muslims among a sea of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic messages that seem to have become the norm in most media outlets.

We at 'The Muslim Voice' always look for literary work regardless of the exact nature of the work. Whether the content is theological, social, political, creative work etc, we encourage prospective writers to let their imagination wander and produce a diverse variety of work. Insha'Allah, the submissions deadline for our next issue is Jan 2, we hope that all of you will consider writing for us. We are always willing to aid those who need help in getting started as a writer. Insh'Allah, we will focus on this issue in upcoming issues.

In addition to writers, it takes quite a bit of financial backing to publish 'The Muslim Voice' issue after issue. We want to thank the Students' Administrative Coucnil at Erindale College for supporting us, and also all of our sponsors. We also wish to extend an invitation to all local businesses to advertise in this magazine. Not only will you be promoting Da'wah but also getting high quality expsosure for your business.

We sincerely hope and your loved ones enjoy this Ramadan edition of 'The Muslim Voice' along with a blessed month of Ramadan and a joyous Eid ul Fitr.

Till then, Assalamu Alaikum Wa'rahmatullahi Wa'barakatuh.

The Muslim Voice

If you have any comments about TMV or want to comment on a piece of work published in this issue, we would like to hear from you at tmv@post.com

TMV also welcomes your submissions for upcoming issues. Send your poetry, short stories, articles, letters, sketches, jokes, and whatever else you can think of to us at tmv@post.com.

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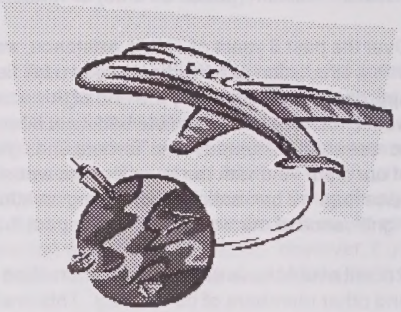

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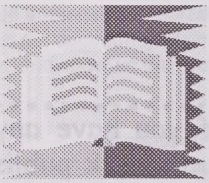

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CURRENT EVENTS

Church puts up anti-Muslim sign

Boise - A new sign outside the Crossroads Assembly of God Church in the town of Wilder equates Islam with evil. The sign, posted in block capital letters, reads: "The spirit of Islam is the spirit of the Antichrist." The church's pastor, who put up the sign Monday, said the message reflects not hatred, but the Gospel. But most of the town's residents, including the mayor, say the sign is inappropriate and passers-by are complaining about the anti-Muslim sentiment. Wilder Mayor Steve Rhodes said he finds the sign offensive, but the city cannot censor the opinion reflected on the sign. "It is inappropriate. It doesn't reflect the community, and it sure doesn't reflect myself or my council," Rhodes said. The sign was put up by Pastor Geoff Cole, who has led the church for three years. "Why in the world would I keep my mouth shut?" Cole said. "I am responsible to sound the alarm to God's people.

Turkey to develop Central Asian Millitaries

Anakara — Turkey is lobbying the United States for a major military role in Central Asia amid the war in Afghanistan. Turkish government sources said Ankara intends to bolster the militaries of Western allies among the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union. The sources said Ankara wants Washington to support and help finance this role as part of the U.S.-led war against terrorism. The military in Ankara has drafted a plan for Turkish help to such countries as Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The sources said the first step would be Turkish help to develop the air forces of the three countries. The initial focus would be on air defense, infrastructure and modernization of air systems. The sources said Turkey would begin with training. The Ankara-based Hurriyet daily said Turkish Air Force Brig. Gen. Hassan Kabas has drafted a report that calls for an examination of the military requirements of Central Asian countries. The newspaper said Turkey would draw on its experience in aiding the Georgian air force.

Arab League wants Powell's statements translated into reality

The Arab League said it wants to see the statements made recently by US Secretary of State, Colin Powell on the Middle-East translated into reality to establish peace in the Middle-East. Powell's statements were balanced as they defined the obligations of the Palestinians and of the Israelis alike, said Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the pan-Arab organization. What is more important in Powell's statements are the correctly used terms of "Israeli occupation" and the "establishment of a Palestinian state" and the need to "put an end of settlements," Moussa said. Secretary Powell, who was speaking at the University of Louisville in Kentucky on American foreign policy generally and Middle East policy in particular, stressed that the Israeli "occupation must end" and that "settlement activity must end" in Palestine.

Nearly 60 percent of Israelis for an independent Palestinian state

Nearly 60 percent of Israelis are for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and for the speeding up of the Middle-East peace process. A poll, conducted by the wide-circulation daily Maariv, showed that 59 percent of Israelis are for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, 36 percent are against and 5 percent refused to answer. Out of the 544 peopled polled, 55 percent wish that negotiations with the Palestinians be accelerated.

Mubarak calls for one Haj only

Egypt- President, Hosni Mubarak, yesterday called on Egyptians not to repeat the Haj, the pilgrimage to the Saudi Arabian city of Mecca, saying the annual ritual was robbing the economy of badly needed hard currency.

A repeat of the pilgrimage by those who had made it before was neither religiously warranted nor helpful to Egypt, he said. The country has been hit hard by the economic fall-out from the 11 September terrorist massacres in the United States. It is an obligation once in a lifetime for Muslims who are both able-bodied and can afford the trip. Many Muslims, however, make the journey several times.

Mr Mubarak said the Haj routinely cost Egypt some three to four billion Egyptian pounds (£500 million £660 million) in foreign currency.

Amnesty International: Israel's policies amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

Amnesty International welcomed today the landmark conclusion by the Committee against Torture stating that Israel's policy of closures and its demolitions of Palestinian homes "may, in certain instances, amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" in breach of Article 16 of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment which Israel ratified in 1991.

Israel's policy of closures has meant that nearly every road to each town or village in the West Bank is closed by piles of earth, concrete blocks, trenches or army-manned barriers. Many roads in the Occupied Territories are prohibited to Palestinians. Palestinian human rights organizations presented to the Committee details of 14 Palestinians who had died and others who had suffered life-threatening medical complications after access to hospital had been delayed. Israel has also pursued a policy of demolishing Palestinian homes for years. Houses have been destroyed because they have breached discriminatory planning laws; as punishment; or for "security" reasons. Over the past year, more than 500 Palestinian homes have been demolished making at least 4,000 people homeless, the great majority of them children.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Joint Halaqa

On Monday October 29, 2001 Dr. Mahdy presented an interesting talk for the weekly joint halaqas held by the MSA. Dr. Mahdy is a well-known Islamic scholar, and has held youth circles in the Jami Mosque for many years. Dr. Mahdy began the halaqa by making a very interesting comment. He said that the Muslims have been given a test and we have not done our homework. From this comment a discussion was started on the roles and responsibilities of Muslims living in North American society. The halaqa was interesting and thought provoking. InshaAllah, Dr. Mahdy has agreed to come back and present more halaqas next semester, as requested by the students, who found this one very useful.

Reem El-Hennawy

"Healing The Wounds"

On Sunday, Oct. 14th, the Muslim community gathered at the University of Toronto to mourn the victims of September 11th and to shed light on the aftermath of the attacks. The speakers included local community members, political figures such as Barbara Hall, and a recorded message from Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson. Accounts from Muslim families who lost loved ones from the attack exposed the sad truth that the Muslim community lost many of its own members on that day. One of the common themes presented was a mourning of not only the victims from the September 11th tragedy, but the countless victims of terrorism and injustice throughout the world who seldom get their voices heard. Those in attendance were also reminded that Islam is a religion of moderation, justice, and peace, not an extremist faith that harbors terrorists. Muslims should hold fast to and be proud of the true and beautiful faith of Islam, which in the hatred of the aftermath is often concealed. Because of the wave of harassment and quest for revenge immediately following September 11th, Muslims were advised to be vocal about any incidents of hate, and use this as an opportunity to share with neighbors the truth about Islam. The night also gave Muslims a chance to show their support for the organizations who were at the forefront of dealing with the backlash from the event. Overall, the event succeeded in removing anxiety and fear from hearts and replacing it with a strengthened sense of community.

By: Zeenat Malam

The Understanding Islam Series Part I - A Short Summary

The "Understanding Islam" series is a series of lectures held to help promote awareness about the religion of Islam. The first lecture (part I) of the series, organized by the Muslim Students' Association (St. George), was held on Friday, Nov. 9th at the Earth Sciences Auditorium (ES 1050). It was attended by muslims and non-muslims alike, and the turnout was impressive, *alhamdulillah*.

Dr. Jamal Badawi is a professor at St. Mary's University, Halifax and a PhD in Management Studies. He is a very well-known Islamic scholar.

Dr. Badawi began by presenting the basics of Islam. He related that the very meaning of the word Islam is "peace", which is derived from the root arabic word "SLM". He then explained the basics of Islamic law, which are grounded on the idea of safeguarding one's faith, mind, honor, etc. He then addressed the meaning of the term "Allah" (the arabic word for God), narrating how it was used by pagan Arabs, and in Arabic bibles. An enlightening point was that it sounds very similar to the Aramaic term "Alaha". Dr. Badawi also described the concept of Allah in Islam, a concept encompassing both Glory and Mercy. Allah has 99 names/attributes - among them those denoting power, wisdom, knowledge, love and justice. It was stressed that in Islam, no intermediates are needed between the individual and Allah, and direct closeness with Allah is emphasized. He elaborated the fact that Islam is a monotheistic religion, and Allah is one and alone in creation, worship and person.

The next topic addressed was the purpose of life, and the duty of man. Man is described in the Qur'an as the "crown of creation", and angels bow down to him. He is endowed with divine breath [32:9], limited by conditions of trust, and is the trustee of Allah. With this trust (to choose between right and wrong) comes moral responsibility in this life, as he will be answerable to Allah in the hereafter. Man's relations with other communities are another key concept in Islam. Dr. Badawi explained the idea of universal brotherhood in Islam [49:13, 30:22] and that there is no compulsion, manipulation or forced conversion in religion [2:256]. Islam is a religion that teaches peaceful co-existence [60:8-9], as long as one's faith is not undermined and one's rights are not taken away (oppression). It advocates the highest degree of moral conduct, and encourages men to deal with each other with kindness and justice. Finally, the speaker addressed the acceptance of plurality in islam [10:19, 11:118-119], and the special place of Jews and Christians [5:5]. He also related that interfaith dialogue is encouraged in Islam [29:46], and that it is essential to seek common grounds, rather than concentrating on mutual differences.

The lecture then turned to the events of Sept. 11th, and the true meaning of Jihad. Most listeners were shocked to hear that the term, Holy War, is nowhere in the Qur'an! In fact, the very idea of war being holy is a paradox, as Dr. Jamal Badawi demonstrated. The term "Jihad" literally means exertion and struggle/effort and Jihad in the battlefield is practiced for

Continued on p. 13...

YOUR LETTERS

Comments on "Hijab" and the Issue of Divorce

Assalam Alaikum,

I was writing a very mundane essay for one of my courses when I decided to visit your site and read some of the articles. I read an article on Hijab by Sister Humairah Irfan (last issue, October 2001) and I was very angered by it. Although I do not disagree with the article's emphasis on hijab as important, my concern is with how it was tied in with the issue of divorce. Perhaps the level of divorce is high because of promiscuity but my guess is that it is much more complex than that. I do not debate that divorce is the most hated things in Islam and for justifiable reasons (i.e. the consequences for children), however I would hate to put all the emphasis on the fact that divorce is related to lack of hijab. Is the article saying that divorce does not exist in segregated societies? If anyone has been following the issues that have arisen within the last year in the Muslim community in the GTA, they will know that segregated communities also have their share of social issues not necessarily framed around women's lack of hijab. And how many of us know adults that grew up in non-divorced homes that were uncaring and now have a variety of adjustment issues as adults. And for that matter, how many of us know of children in homes where there are a mother and father present but the homes are explosive with a variety of abuse issues? Divorce is on the rise within the Muslim community also and amongst law-abiding, hijab-wearing Muslim citizens. Oh and surprise, surprise but even the Muslim woman who does shroud herself and does not display her beauty and attraction in such a way so as to produce carnal desires in the hearts of men gets raped.

The reason for divorce as being that of 'unrestricted society' is rather simplistic and very myopic. Articles like "Hijab" makes divorce a woman's burden. And frankly a lot of us have been working hard to get away from this perspective of blaming women. Thus, it is rather disheartening to read an article like this one. I don't have the answer to why divorce occurs but I do know many women who live their lives black and blue to stay and not have their children grow up in divorced and 'uncaring environments'. Women who read articles like "Hijab" come to believe their oppression as their fault instead of a community's responsibility. And what message are you sending to those women who do not wear hijab, that if your marriage ended up in divorce it is really your fault? These are not simple problems, so do not look for simple answers to them. Yes, it is very problematic that divorce is on the rise but what you may find when you start to speak to men and women who are divorced and men and women that are married is that there are a variety of social issues (i.e. child abuse, pornography) that are tearing are families apart. We need to address these issues and have dialogues around finding constructive solutions, not blaming genders. In the glorious and golden past, all these problems existed but social stigma did not allow for divorce to occur and now that perhaps the social stigma is not as strong (although I can feel many people disagreeing with me on this point vehemently) divorce does occur. Divorce needs to still exist as a viable option. As I understand it, Allah (SWT) does not want anyone to be part of an oppressive situation. Divorce will continue to occur in high numbers though within the Muslim community if we as men and women do not take stock and responsibility for our issues. I hoped that some of us in the community had come a long way from this wishy-washy generalization stuff, but I guess I was wrong.

Meh Jabeen Muhammad, Masters Program,
Faculty of Social Work

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Potluck Iftaar: Dec 4th, ISC, Cumberland Room
- MSA's GRAND Iftaar, Thursday, Dec. 6th, Wetmore Hall, New College
- Brothers' Halaqas – Thursdays 12-1, ISC
- General Sisters' Sports, Thursdays 11-1, GSU Gym, 16 Bancroft Avenue
- Taraweeh on Campus, ISC
  Isha' prayer will be at 6:45 p.m. and Taraweeh will start at 7:00 p.m. insha'Allah.

ISC - Internatinal Student Center (33 St. George St)

Eid Accommodation for Exams

Eid-ul-Fitr will be on Sunday, December 16th or Monday, December 17th, 2001, insha'Allah. If it's on Monday, December 17th, Muslim students with one or more exams on that day can arrange with their registrar to write a makeup exam at an earlier/later date. Please talk to a representative of your registrar and have with you:

A- your T-card (student card)

B- the course number for which you wish to write the exam earlier/later

C- the dates and times of all your other exams

Sisters' Talent Night

This is a call for sisters interested in helping out with the....brace yourselves girls...

ANNUAL SISTERZ TALENT NITE!!

****

This is your chance to be involved in the production of a most amazing show! So don't let this opportunity slip through your fingers....

We're looking for sisters who would like to perform, and sisters who would like to help out with running the event.

Are you interested in making this event a success? Please contact:

Maha Maria - Sisterz Talent Nite Coordinator
maha_maria@hotmail.com

Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

It puzzles me – it really does. Most Muslims are well-aware of the sad state that our *Ummah* was in, prior to the horrific events which the world saw on September 11, 2001 and the events that we are blinded from in Afghanistan, Palestine and other surrounding countries by our so called unbiased media. Nevertheless, in such times of crises, our actions remain increasingly divergent from the teachings of our noble Prophet (SAWS) and the religion of Islam.

I can only comment on the situation that I have observed in North America, specifically in Canada, but I am sure that one can make similar claims for the situation in other parts of the globe. In today's modern world, we see the bombing of not one nation but several. We see the oppression and ruthless slaying of not one people, but many. And yet, we as Muslims in North America remain ignorant to these global issues and are engulfed in the little worries that seem to cause havoc in our peaceful, luxurious lives. We have become so accustomed to our tunnel-vision of things that we remain adamant about harassing our own brothers and sisters at their slightest mistakes, lashing out at each other without an ounce of forgiveness. *Subhan'Allah* brothers and sisters! As the common cliché goes, finally it is time to put your money where your mouth is.

What will it take to change our behavior? When will we realize that the Muslims of the past formed the basis of an empire where the deepest and most revolutionizing thought processes took place? When will we learn to look beyond the smaller picture to realize that each one of us, in our own little niche, contributes a significant part towards the formation of the global picture? Most Muslims in the West are among the professional and educated section of Muslim society. Nevertheless, we fall quite easily into the traps of the Western materialistic, superficial culture.

We have to learn to become thinkers and reflectors. We have to look beyond the superficiality of the consumption-based media that brainwashes us in the most elegant of manners, portraying only what "sells." We have to examine, analyze and understand our own community, its strengths and weaknesses, and then work to resolve the shortcomings using our strengths. It is with great ease that we can forego this responsibility and live our lives in delusion, ignorance and error. Nevertheless, do not forget The Day when Allah (SWT) will surely question our actions.

So, the question comes down to, "What can we do?" Well, there is always more than enough we can do, if we truly wish. The possibilities are infinite.

- Educate yourself and your family in the teachings of Islam. Once you feel confident and qualified, take these teachings to others, Muslims and non-Muslims. **Do explicit and implicit dawah with wisdom** (don't have the "holier than thou" attitude).

- Know who you are and **be proud of who you are**. Islam is a mercy from Allah (SWT) for all of mankind. Know that Muslims are calm, peaceful people. There is no reason to feel apologetic or guilty for the actions of others who share your faith for something your religion does not teach. Learn your history, and tell others about it.

- Get involved in the community through active **Muslim youth groups and sacrifice your time and money**. Remember that it is essential to work with youth groups to ensure the maximal effect of your efforts in the community, in an organized manner. Use your strengths to your advantage and contribute for the betterment of the Muslim community, the global picture, in your own way.

- Remain aware of the situation of your brothers and sisters all around the world. In addition to the most common sources of news, read Islamic Media (www.islamonline.net, www.iviews.com). Organize events that will help them: fund-raisers, blood donor clinics, etc. Donate generously to Muslim approved relief agencies. At the least, pray that Allah (SWT) facilitates their trials and tribulations. Realize that although we may differ in terms of language, skin color, and geographic location, we are all one people. **Feel the pain of your brothers and sisters in distress!**

Al-Mundhir

(Don't) Give Da'wah with Impunity

The last two months have been very difficult for Muslims around the world. We are under attack, physically, emotionally and ideologically. It seems that every time I open the newspapers or listen to another talk show, I hear Islam being presented, falsely or inaccurately or by people with agendas of their own. Our voices, when raised in protest, are dismissed as the ravings of 'extremist elements' or 'fundamentalists' or 'supporters of brutality' or dozens of other clichés. And personally, this has made me frustrated and angry at the world we live in. And then, like a sign from Allah (SWT) I received the following advice from the youngmuslims.ca website that I felt I had to share with you.

> **"Tell My Servants (O Muhammad) to always say that which is the best (*ahsan*). Verily, it is Satan who sows discord among people. Satan is indeed an open enemy to human beings." [Qur'an 17:53].**

The message of this ayah is one that is timeless and important, more than ever today. Through the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), Allah (SWT) commands us to only speak the best. We should never lose our temper with Muslims or non-Muslims, for to do so is to please Satan. We, as Muslims, should always keep anger out of our words, even when insults or other forms of abuse are showered upon us. We should also never say an untruth to an opponent, no matter how much we are provoked.

Satan will try his utmost to make us lose our temper, to lie, and to hurt the cause of Allah (SWT). Today, with all the lies and half-truths circling the globe about our wonderful *Deen*, with all the hate directed at Islam and Muslims, it is very hard to stay calm. But today, more than ever, what is needed is peace and patience. Anger is a tool of Satan. Remember, our enemy is Satan, not the person standing in front of us who may be rude, because *insha'Allah*, he may come to accept the Truth, but Satan never will.

Our example, as always, should be the Prophet (*SAWS*). Though he and the first Muslims of Makkah and Madinah were harassed, verbally and physically abused, taunted and threatened, the Prophet (SAWS) never spoke back to them in anger. In fact, he prayed to Allah that the disbelievers would be guided onto the Straight Path, he still prayed to Allah to guide those who hurt him onto the Right Path. This is how we must be today, clear and reasonable, firm yet patient, spreading the Word of Allah in an Islamic manner, truthfully and calmly.

Zeenath Zeath, Alumnus, University of Toronto (St. George)
Source: www.youngmuslims.ca

Just a Reminder

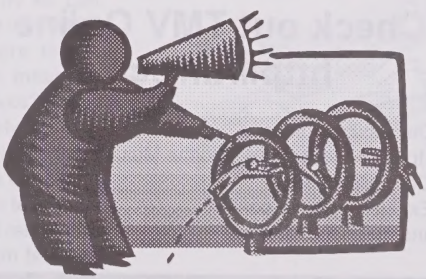
Since all this commotion has started here in North America, the Muslims living here have been given a wake up call as to where we stand with both our fellow neighbors and with the rest of the Ummah.

Regardless of who is responsible, we as Muslims have a job to fulfill: to act in preventing injustice to befall on our Muslim populace and prevent them from doing injustice to others. And as it stands, we have much work ahead of us. For those who have done something –great and jazak' Allah, but please do continue to do more and get the rest of us involved. As for those of us who have not done as much as we can, this is time to speak out against injustice whether it befalls others or us. If we do not, we will be next. Many of us have heard of the saying, "if one part of the Muslim Ummah feels pain, then the other limbs [us] are to aid it." We have stood by in the sidelines one too may times, from recently Central Asia (i.e. Chechnya, etc.) to strife-burden Palestine, and all those in between. If we don't stop injustice to all humankind, what will we say to our Lord when He questions us about such.

Whether we realize it or not, we are paying taxes through work, school, GST, PST, property tax and whatnot for the services rendered by the government. In a manner of speaking, we are the customers and we need to be aware that we are paying for: the injustice that is befalling people around the world. If that is not reason enough to stand up for justice, remember that we are also paying for the injustice that is in the progress of befalling us. How so?

We have seen or are in the progress of seeing Bills and Act's being passed to curtail the freedom of Muslims and Arabs around the world. Who knows, we may pay *Zakat* and that will be reason enough to persecute and eradicate Muslims throughout the world. Remember, if we allow a limb of the Muslim Ummah to be permanently amputated, it is only us who will inevitably feel such pain. Stand Up and stand tall against oppression and injustice. Help your fellow human whether he oppresses or is oppressed.

R. Nasim, Alumnus, University of Toronto, Chemical Eng.



SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 AND ITS AFTERMATH

Assalaamu Alaikum

How idiotic can the situation get? I mean, are we puppets at the end of a string? All these engineers, respected scientists, philosophers, thinkers...what is wrong with all of them? Why the deafening silence?

September 11, 2001 was a sad day in American history. The world grieved for all except those individuals who considered civilian killing permissible. America claims not to believe in this kind of innocent slaughter. However, it contradicts this belief by having placed sanctions on Pakistan and India for producing nuclear arms (which by the way America still possesses). These sanctions did not affect the people higher up in the economical hierarchy; they affected the ordinary people and innocent civilians. The sanctions placed on Iraq to "flush" Saddam, did not affect Saddam but instead killed the already suffering children of that land.

Now, once again, it is happening in Afghanistan. President Bush made a statement just after the bombing had started, "America is a friend of the Afghan people"—he said, a friend? A friend indeed. Under the banner of collateral damage and misguided missiles, this technologically advanced state is killing civilians, innocent people. These people can barely make their ends meet. Nobody asked America to "flush" Bin Laden; they did it to comfort the American citizens. But the sane elements of the world are already against the barbaric acts of September 11 because of the nature of the attack. And yet, the same sane world remains deafeningly silent when scores of civilians are dying—in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

I cannot recall any constitutional law that authorizes death on civilians because of the terrorist attacks carried out by another group. If a group in Afghanistan is of terrorist nature, then the country should not suffer. Every life that is lost is a generation of Afghanis lost. To make this more poignant, since all people are equal, every American life lost is a generation of Americans lost.

America has ruled the UN in its actions. It has carried out decisions based upon its own suffering. If all those other countries that are suffering due to American economic/political policies rise up and decide to wage war on America due the inhumane pain they are undergoing—then, quite simply, the sight will not be pretty. This is the precedent set by America itself.

These are just some of my views in relation to the events of September 11.

Anonymous

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The Gap between Men

As we look at the state of mankind as a whole we will observe great disunity amongst each other. Ever wonder, even with religion upholding a common ground for all, why we still aren't united? God only knows the true answer to that, but we can still come to our own conclusion. If we attempt to understand the cause of this separation we can only then begin to eliminate it.

Through my observation on the nature of man, I have concluded that this separation is caused by something called 'culture'. So what is culture? Culture is the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge, which constitute the shared basis of social action. Now knowing this, you are probably wondering what the basis of my conclusion is.

There are many incidents where I have heard someone or a group of people leave their community Mosque or any other religious center to begin their own because of some cultural difference. Don't get me wrong building a place of worship is very good, it encourages spiritual growth however the Prophet (SAWS) has taught us that actions are based on intentions. These cultural differences that we are faced with in our community are so petty it makes me wonder if culture is the real problem.

The glorious Qur'an tells us:

O Mankind! We have created you from a male and female and made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Surely, the noblest of you in God's sight are those who are best in conduct. (49:13)

Another way culture leaves us in conflict is in regards to who we should marry. A Muslim first or an African? A Muslim first or an Arab? A Muslim first or an Indian? etc. If only we understood the ways of our religion: Islam, this option would be easily eliminated.

Narrated Abu Hurairah (radi'Allahu 'anhu): The Prophet (SAWS) said, "A woman is married for four (things), i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should take possession of (marry) the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a loser." Sahih Al-Bukhari [7:27-O.B]

From the above hadith our confusion is easily cleared up. Yet some go through their whole life being taught by culture to marry only in their 'own kind'! Are we not all brothers and sisters in Islam?

An occasion when culture is also incorporated is during weddings. Including culture in weddings at times will only lessen the blessings of the marriage for much sin is committed. Some cultures, such as the Western culture; sadly being adopted by the Muslims, allows the intermingling between males and females, where as Islam discourages it as it begins to dissolves ones modesty or 'haya'. The Asian culture has a custom that encourages the bride to wear large amounts of gold and sit on a stage in a glistening outfit- these only invites the evils of Shaytaan!

We must realize Islam is a way of life, it is not something you practice only one day in a week. It is a lifestyle, based on the teaching of the Qur'an and example of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). If this is Islam, then how does culture come into all of this? Culture is also a way of life as it teaches us values, beliefs etc. Clearly we can see these two ways of life are conflicting because everyone's culture is not identical to Islam. Does this mean we rid culture entirely from our lives? No, of course not. If we completely remove culture where will we learn how to cook our food? The use of culture can do no harm unless it contradicts the teachings of Islam. Although we should remember to apply moderation as Islam teaches us to be moderate.

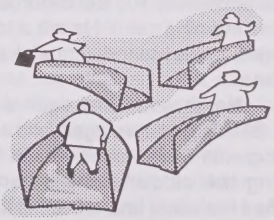
It is now, while we still have a chance to close the gap between one another. In order to do this, we must strengthen our knowledge so that we may be able to distinguish between culture and religion. Once we establish an understanding we can begin to weed out the part of culture that contradicts our beautiful religion, Islam. By applying knowledge and wisdom we can begin to diversify ourselves and spread Islam to its fullest potential.

We must remember that this gap we have created is artificial as we all have the SAME objective. To be obedient to our Lord, the Most High! Once we have built a firm bond of brotherhood in Islam, Insha'Allah we will stop trying to destroy each other, but rather support and build a foundation for the revival of our Ummah (nation).

Whatever good comes out of this it is from Allah (SWT) alone, and whatever bad comes from this it is mine.

Our Lord! Bestow on us endurance and make our foothold sure and give us help against those who reject faith. (2:250)

By Shireen Patel, Staff Writer



ADHAAN

Part 1: The Boat

"ALLAHU AKBAR! ALLAHU AKBAR!" he shouted. "ALLAHU AKBAR!" another time, and his voice echoed from inside his room all around the bay. "ALLAHU AKBAR!" he shouted again. And again, a distant voice repeated his words.

He sweated; he dreamt. He heard waves sliding onto the beach. The Atlantic Ocean persisted in its effort to submerge this little island. The tiny island had so far enjoyed a secret success against the giant ocean. He heard perfectly the minute sounds of distant birds. He turned his head away from the ceiling and felt, in his dizziness, as if the exertion pushed him off a ledge. His gaze fixed itself outside through the open window at his right: He saw a square section of indigo sky surrounded by the black of his room. The sky grew lighter every minute.

He raised himself out of bed and went outside.

He felt dizzy and uneasy. Wearing only shorts, Bilal emerged from his small residence on the beach of his tiny island. It's location: 336 kilometres south-west of continental Portugal. Lofty clouds—checked by a large black dome, the cliff at the end of the bay,—filled the sky, and the elegant westerly wind pushed them over the water. The ocean waves at the base of the cliff splashed with usual vigour. Bilal saw the activity of water and foam from afar, but heard nothing of its sound for the cliff was a fair distance away. His feet disturbed the pristine morning sand. He left a trail of footprints by his meandering walk out of the hut.

He shivered and squinted his eyes. Blinking his eyes again and again walking with folded arms—each hand holding the elbow of the other—he reached the water and fell to his knees on the warm, wet sand.

We found him sitting half-submerged; the tumbling waves came up as high as his chest. The warm water washed him amid the sporadic high-pitched sounds of shore birds. He sat with his arms wrapped around his chest-high knees. His face conveyed unease. We saw his lips quivering, and we perceived a repeating sound—a low murmur—coming out of his shivering chest.

He eventually made *Fajr* with us, and by noon he moved and spoke with energy. The sun lit the world through fleets of moving clouds; everyone had been awake for hours. By this time, we had all gathered in the building on the mountain for our work assignments. My group left for the cliffs of the bay as he pushed buttons on his phone. He smiled and said to me: "I'll see you people soon, —" and as the phone connected—"Ma, hey, us-Salaamu 'alaykum . . . it's me . . ."

He turned around and walked to the conference room of the concrete building. I didn't hear the conversation, of course—that would be impolite—but, lingering, I watched him go out to the verandah. He held the wireless phone to his ear as if he was listening to a phrase of immense wisdom residing within a sea shell. I thought that our work on the island was very strange, and in an instant I returned to it.

Walking briskly down the steps of the concrete building and over the trails of footprints and wheels, I caught up with my group. We proceeded leisurely to the cliffs and the boat at its base.

By the time we passed the thatched huts along the middle of the curving shore we were under a full sun. Many of the clouds had gone. The sun bathed us in light, and, glistening from our own sweat, we reached the elevated cliff grounds satisfied by a good walk.

We laboured the rest of the day, and returned at *Zuhr* and *'Asr* time to the yellow and brown huts along the beach where stood a *Masjid*.

Before entering the *Masjid* we went to wash for prayer in the *wudu* area, which lay a few yards from the back of the *Masjid*. The *wudu* area consisted of about forty-five marble cubes placed in intervals around a low wall-like structure which somewhat curved around the *Masjid*. This crescent of black wall had a funny habit of catching and redirecting, from one end to the other, voices and sounds of the splashing water. Water came out of pipes in front of the chairs—we sat on the marble cubes—so we would sit and wash for prayer as the falling water ran around a ditch between our feet and the low wall, which created a curving moat of water around the back of the *Masjid*. Though the pipes had an off-valve, we never closed the pipes. We would just let it run because the water drained into the water filtering system underneath the beach. We could always hear the murmur of running water from inside the *Masjid*, which was built of reeds.

Bilal had insisted on this type of old-fashioned material for the one *Masjid*, two storehouses, and 45 huts on the island. With displeasure, he had accepted our request to construct the central building with concrete and bricks. That building was on the raised central land at the heart of the island—what he called the island's mountain. He enjoyed staying there, it turned out, and he would grinningly refer to the structure as 'the Command Center'.

He employed four groups on his island. The first group, our group, had nine members including me. The second group had nine also, and they worked along the shore line and dusty cliff base often using a boat. Fifteen more, mostly S.C.U.B.A. divers, shared two boats to search waters all around the island. The fourth and final group had only four persons who worked on computers in the Command Center. He would emerge from that building with the team of four and walk with them to the *Masjid* on the beach. His voice, when

he called *adhaan*, would catch our attention suddenly.

He called the *adhaan* standing on top of the strong and flat roof of the *Masjid*. A ladder always leaned against the outside wall of the building. His manner of moving during *Salaah* time slowed. And whenever we walked from the beach to the *Masjid* for prayers, we would see him slowly descending the ladder with that aspect natural to an old and delicate man.

After '*Asr* that day, we returned to the cliffs as usual. The men who stayed on the island for only one or two weeks were always the first ones back to the cliffs. Their *Qasr Salaah* were shorter than the permanent workers (like me) who were not travelling.

He left the *Masjid* later than everyone and appeared before *Maghrib* time at the cliff grounds. He sat away from our work area, in the grass, wearing a blue *shalwar-chemise* suit. When I first saw the suit I was surprised by the quality of it. We had both been on the island since the beginning and I never saw him wear it before that day. I had no idea he even had such a suit. You have to understand about these suits: they are loose, casual, 100 percent cotton clothes that comprise baggy pants and a full-sleeved shirt that extends separately down the front and back to the knees; these two lower parts of the chemise often flutter in the breeze. Surrounded by Portuguese and Moroccan diggers, this Pakistani man wore his traditional Pakistani dress and watched the Atlantic Ocean.

But he jumped up when came a sound like that of thunder. It was a gigantic ripping sound, as if an enormous mouth had bitten into a giant apple. The sound seemed to come from everywhere. There was not a cloud in the sky now, no chance of a storm. Bilal bounded forward then crawled to the cliff's edge on all fours. He must have been looking at the other team of nine and their boat at the base of the cliff. The ripping kept going, as of a stampede of one million horses; getting louder and louder; all around us, on top of us. The ground moved, a giant roused from sleep.

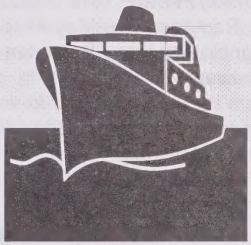
"There's a hole in the cliff—everybody off! Now!" he yelled back at us. "Leave the equipment. To the beach! Hurry!"

A big dust cloud rose up from the side of the cliff, and we could no longer see the Atlantic. It slowly rose high in the sky and spread across the sun. The cloud of dust resembled the face of a giant ghost with tanned skin, rolling his head back into the sky—the sun its yawning mouth.

At first, no one but Bilal saw the damage, for we rushed to the lower grounds of the beach. The debris of dust and dirt buried the other group at the base of the cliff. The debris came down for ten minutes creating a dome that was half-sinking in the water.

Next Issue - Part 2: The Traveller

Abul Arifin Syed, York University



Continued from p. 6
("Understanding Islam" - Part I)

defense and liberation, under two conditions – either when others fight against you (defense) or against oppression (for one's usurped rights). Generally, Jihad is simply striving with the truth against evil. Charity, sharing the truth, self-purification, fasting – all these are forms of Jihad. The speaker also elaborated on the rules of conduct in the battlefield. Prerequisites for war are purity of intention and a formal declaration by a legitimate authority. Furthermore, war is a last resort after all just peace initiatives have been exhausted. The concept of collateral damage is also one foreign to Islamic conduct in the battlefield. Non-combatants (innocent women and children) should be spared, destruction should be avoided, the injured should be treated humanely, and a strict moral code should be observed, even on the battlefield. These are the rulings of the religion of Islam.

Finally, Dr. Badawi commented on recent events, stating that there is no political or religious justification for the attacks. He explained that crime is an explicit violation of Islam, and drew parallels to other crimes on the basis of various religions and ideologies – apartheid in South Africa, the Spanish inquisition, etc. and general crimes committed by individuals without justification (e.g. Timothy McVeigh). Here, Dr. Badawi made a *crucial* point. He noted that in all these other crimes, the associated religions were NOT put on trial, so Islam has no obligation to explain the Sept. 11 attacks or to justify itself, because there is no possible religious justification for such acts! He addressed how Muslims are victims of violence most frequently around the world, and added that many Muslims had been working in the twin towers as well. Conversely, he thanked the many who had offered support and shown solidarity towards the Muslim community. He also addressed briefly the idea of Islam oppressing women, and demonstrated the inaccuracy of such a claim. He questioned why God would oppress half of his creation, and stressed spiritual and human equality. In Islam, a woman is not responsible for the "fall of man" [7:19-23], and pregnancy and childbirth are causes for respect of females. Men and women have complementary, yet equitable roles – and neither gender is preferred.

This concluded the lecture, after which an extended question-answer session took place. All in all, it was an extremely informative and enlightening experience for all those who attended. *Jazaak Allah* and many thanks to all those who helped organize it. This series shall continue *insha'Allah*, and we hope to see an even fuller auditorium next time! (Note: video and audiotapes of the lecture are available from the MSA – E-mail msa_uoft@yahoogroups.com)

By: Farah I. Khan

What is Ramadan?

Ramadan, one of the holiest months of the year for the world's one billion Muslims, falls on the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. Its significance stems from the fact that it's the month of obligatory fasting that represents one major pillar of the five pillars of Islamic practice. One lovely event that is associated with Ramadan was that the Holy Quran was revealed during this month and thus presenting the Quran to mankind in its entirety. Thus, Ramadan is a month of fasting, worship, reading Quran and reflection upon one's faith. It is also a month of mercy, forgiveness, solidarity and mutual help — the month of all blessings.

Ramadan consists of fasting from sunrise to sunset. This includes abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual activity during daylight. This is a time for all Muslims to purify themselves from the temptations of the worldly life and try to establish a place for themselves in Heaven in the hereafter. It is stated that, "When the month of Ramadan begins, the gates of Paradise are open and the gates of (Hell) Fire are closed and the devils are chained" (Bukhari). Ramadan is one way that Allah (SWT) allows us to secure our place in the afterlife. Thus, we should not let the month pass away without reaping benefits for ourselves.

Ramadan is not simply about controlling temptations such as hunger and thirst. The true challenge is to keep all facets of our physical senses such as our eyes, ears, tongue, hands and thoughts away from sin. It is recommended that we restrain from viewing anything that distracts our heart and diverts it from the remembrance of Allah (SWT). Jabir relates from Anas that God's Messenger, on him be peace,said: 'Five things break a man's fast: lying, backbiting, scandalmongering, perjury and a lustful gaze.'

Furthermore, Ramadan is a time where we should practice patience and reserve by guarding our tongues from idle chatter, lies, obscenity, gossip, arguments, and controversy. Instead, we should learn the merits of silence and spend that time in the remembrance of Allah (SWT) and keep our tongues occupied with the recitation of the Quran and dua's. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Fasting is a shield; so when one of you is Fasting he should not use foul or foolish talk. If someone attacks him or insults him, let him say: "I am Fasting, I am Fasting!" Likewise, we should try to stay away from those among us that do backbite and tell lies. For half of the participation in any conversation is listening. That is why the Prophet (SAWS), said: 'The backbiter and his listener are copartners in sin.'

The object of fasting is to induce moderation. Thus, even though it is tempting to enjoy delicious foods that are specially prepared during iftaar time, we need to make sure that we avoid overeating. The nature of fasting is to weaken the forces which are Satan's means of leading us back to evil. It is therefore important to limit our intake to what one would consume on a normal night, when not fasting. Moreover, we should try to go about the day normally, attending classes and working on assignments. We should not spend the entire day sleeping waking up just in time for iftaar. This defeats the whole purpose of the fast. We need to feel hunger and thirst, and use these feelings to help us understand this feeling of weakness and starvation that millions of others in the world feel on a daily basis.

Lastly, we need to be humble during Ramadan. There is no guarantee that any of our fasts, prayers or dua's will be accepted by Allah (SWT). Thus, after the fast has been broken, we should make dua that Allah (SWT) accepts our worship. May Allah (SWT) accept all of our prayers and fasts this Ramadan (Ameen).

From Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship by Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, trans. from the Ihya' by Mukhtar Holland

Sources:
Fasting - http://islam.org/audio/ra190/
http://www.soundvision.com/ramadan/innerf.shtml

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "Religion is very easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So you should not be extremists, but try to be near to perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded; and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings, the nights." [Bukhari]

Medical Benefits of Fasting

In addition to the spiritual values of fasting and the reward from Allah (SWT), there are Physical rewards that come by our not eating for a short time. These rewards are reaped not only by the over plump person, but by anyone who fasts. The general well being of a person on a fast has been noted by physicians. Many doctors advise fasting for patients tussling with gout, heart disease, skin disorder, general intemperance to food and drink, or excessive smoking.

Weight is generally unaffected depending on the intake and the expenditure of food energy. In fact, some Muslims put on weight during Ramadhan due to excessive food intake. If after Ramadhan is over, we find that we have put on weight instead of losing some, we should look at ourselves critically for we have not followed the Prophet's Sunnah. The Prophet (SAWS) used to have a light Suhoor and light Iftar meals. Thus, we should not indulge in overeating. If we follow the correct regime of fasting, then we can avoid certain diseases that are benefited by the loss of weight through fasting and caloric restriction: hypertension, diabetes, obesity, osteoarthiritis, radiculopathies, etc.

During the fast, serum magnesium is increased. Magnesium has a cardio-protective effect and is used frequently in the treatment of heart attacks. Magnesium also has an anti-platelet and vasodilator effects, thus preventing thrombosis and vascular stasis, respectively. High magnesium levels can also prevent calcium from being deposited in body tissues. Among many other benefits, magnesium also acts on neuromuscular junctions and on bronchiolar muscle tissue, thus preventing leg cramps and relieving asthma, respectively.

There is an increased secretion of growth hormone by the pituitary gland during the fast. Physiological effects of growth hormone include the increased protein synthesis, intracellular lipolysis, and stimulation of collagen synthesis, which helps reduce the onset of wrinkles. Unlike anabolic steroids, growth hormone causes no acceleration of bone maturation. Therefore, children can safely fast during Ramadhan from an early age.

During the fast, certain endogenous, narcotic-like substances known as opioids (encephalins) are released into the body. They have a tranquilizing and elating effect on the mind. These are probably also responsible for prevention of psychosomatic diseases. The opioids have several effects, including the slowing of metabolism to conserve energy. Another effect of opioids may be that, although they cause elation as well as intense hunger, they do not drive a person to eat with sheer gluttony.

Fasting also improves the quality and intensity of sleep. The processes of brain and body repair take place during sleep. Two hours of sleep during Ramadhan are more satisfying and refreshing than more hours of sleep otherwise. Because old people have much less deep sleep, fasting is particularly important for them, and it increases the depth of sleep. Deep sleep accelerates protein synthesis and increases production of memory molecules.

It should be noted that Muslims who have been fasting regularly since childhood have been exposed to different sleep/wake and light/darkness cycles on a daily basis in one annual lunar month. Hence, it may be easier for them to synchronize their circadian, circalunar, and circannual biological rhythms under difficult conditions, such as the ill effects of jet lag and adjusting to different time zones while traveling.

If there are adverse circumstances surrounding the fast, such as (1) dehydration from exercise or hot weather; (2) too little food or water being available at Suhoor; (3) the fast being prolonged for any reason, the following changes may occur: If the diet is otherwise normal, the renal blood flow remains unchanged even after four days of complete deprivation of water. There is no decrease in plasma volume and no hemoconcentration, because the interstitial reserves will be called upon. Water deprivation causes the pituitary gland to secrete anti-diuretic hormones, which reduce urinary output to about 1 ounce/hour, thus conserving water.

Physical benefits of Taraweeh Salat

Throughout the year, the average Muslim performs five daily prayers, which amount to gentle physical exercise, involving each and every muscle in the body. During the fasting month of Ramadhan, additional prayers are performed at night, called the Taraweeh, ranging from eight to twenty cycles. Such additional exercise, besides expending any extra calories ingested at Iftar, improves flexibility, co-ordination and relaxation response, reduces stress-related automatic responses in normal people, and relieves anxiety and depression. Gentle exercise improves overall fitness and emotional well being and increases longevity. Therefore, Taraweeh salat makes people feel much better and healthier and puts the mind at ease.

Note: Taraweeh prayer is performed solely for the pleasure of Allah (SWT). The physical benefits of Taraweeh salat as exercise are strictly additional.

By Dr. Ebrahim Kazim. Essays on Islamic Topics. Trinidad and Tobago: Islamic Academy, 1993.

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting.)"

Poetry Corner

IMAGES

I see images that overtake me, overwhelm me deep within my soul,
There is fire
There is rubble
There is smoke

The children are the same, New York, Afghanistan, Rwanda, Bosnia, Vietnam.....
I am a mother.
Where are their mothers?
There are innocent eyes
There are involuntary witnesses
There is no place to call home

War and terrorism, same outcome leading to profound human anguish
Is this justice or revenge, senseless annihilation of life,
There is desolation
There is destruction
There is fear

Debris, rocks, papers or walls that until moments ago were shelter are now helpless dust
Humans huddled in stupor, grief-stricken, mourning the dead, guilty of survival
Again, where am I, East or West?
Same images, different latitudes and longitudes

Choosing the place of our birth is not within our realm of choice
Our birthplace could have been Rwanda, Palestine, Afghanistan...
Could we have survived while our children died?

Collateral Damage, Targets, A New World Order, Fireworks or Explosions
Where do these images lead me?
An outcry to God, a prayer for a better world

It is a test of my Faith
It is a test of our Humanity.

S. Javeed, Alumnus, University of Toronto, 9T3

THAT DAY IS COMING...

I was just thinking about time... about heaven and hell...

Seeing those signs all around, and asking how long would it stay still...

How long will there be a world, how long till the sun doesn't rise...

We know it, we've all been told, that day is coming and it might not be nice.

A day when the sea covers the land, a day when the dead come back alive...

A day that's so terrifying, and you know if you'll survive...

And then it's time for pay back in front of our Creator,

When our hands will talk and say how you were a sin maker...

When your feet will speak about all those places you've been to...

And when your eyes rewind the stuff that you've seen too...

By now you should know your way and you'll be looking happy or pale

Because a long time ago when you failed to prepare, you were preparing to fail...

So now it's time to walk on fire, either you fall or you move on...

If you pass all the way to the doors of heaven, there you'll be invited in...

Or you might just fall in the hell fire to pay back every single sin...

It's like one of your exams: But that's the final test...

So just start preparing now, and try doing your best...

Karim Ragheb, University ofToronto, (St. George), Year 2, Life Sciences

Poetry Corner

A Walk in the Rain

It was a Friday in fall. Walking in the park, seeing the leaves on the trees, the spectacle of colors, I felt myself returning to nature. The rain only added to the picturesque beauty as the drops fell from leaf to leaf. The sounds of these precious drops accompanied by that of the cool breeze was all that could be heard. The gentle sounds they created started me on the path to tranquility. The birds flew in their elegant formations, rising against the beating rain and gliding with the wind, obeying Allah (SAW) completely. They were filled with purpose, not wasting a moment of their time to laziness or despair. Then, as I was walking, I looked in the distance and stopped.Quickly, the beauty I was being privileged to see sank in. On both sides of the stream were trees with colors of gold, red and green. How I yearned to paint, to capture that picture. There was a bend and I could not see the rest. I saw the rain feeding the earth, the animals and the trees.

However, I used more than my eyes to see. With my heart, I saw the perfect harmony of these trees, these birds, all coming together to form one lovely idea – the magnificence of nature. As I continued to stare, I could feel happiness pouring into my heart. Strange though it may be, my thoughts and feelings were absorbed into this setting. The purity of nature fused with my heart. There were no feelings of hate, resentment or envy. These wonderful parts of nature were obeying the laws prescribed to them, seemingly unaware of their own beauty. It was here that I was reminded of my Creator, my Source of Hope and how complete I can be if only I submit to the divine laws, as nature does, and rid myself of the evil that pecks at the hearts of humans. It was here that I gained a deeper desire to free my heart, my soul and my mind by following that which nature follows. Life is but moments and just as these birds will not live forever, just as that moment did not last forever, nor will this body that my soul inhabits. I realized that to give my heart to this life would be like giving my entire heart to that moment, a temporal state in which everything is in a constant flux.

Anonymous

War's Little Innocents

Sad hazel eyes
Staring at me from behind
An invisible barrier
Separating us.
I see that tear rolling down your cheek.
You make no sound
As silent as death.
Your eyes flicker
As you search for somebody.

Anybody.

Stumbling around the camp,
You fall into a red puddle
Unaware that it's blood.

Why is everyone sleeping?
I want to play.

A distant rumble startles you.
You stand amazed
At the big silver bird flying over you.
Eagerness fills you as you eye
The object falling from it.
You run towards it,
Not aware that you are running
To your grave.
I tried to warn you
But you didn't hear me.
That invisible barrier separated us.
One flash.
One second.
You're gone, never to return.
And the earth trembles
From the sound of a
Mother weeping.

If a bomb explodes
and nobody is alive to hear it,
does it make a sound?

Asmaa Hussein
Age: 16, Grade 11
Silverthorn, CI

THE VIRTUES OF FASTING SIX DAYS OF SHAWWAL

All praise be to Allah.
May His choicest blessings and peace be upon
His messenger and slave,
the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS),
And peace be upon his family and Companions, and
All who follow his guidance until the Day of Resurrection.

In Ramadan, we often find opportunities to do extra prayers and good deeds. Forgoing food and drink, many Muslims acquire a taste for *taqwa* as the month goes on—an appreciation of the majesty and beauty of Allah (SWT) in our lives. By the mercy and grace of Allah (SWT), when the blessed month of Ramadan nears closure, we will pray to Allah (SWT) that He has accepted our fasting, prayers, and good deeds. We will thank him for the *taqwa* flowering in our hearts, *insha Allah.*

However, as we enter the month of Shawwal, let us not lose what we gained. We should continue to perform all the righteous acts that we trained ourselves to do regularly in Ramadan. The good deeds of Ramadan are like flowers, but the self-restraint we learn in Ramadan is like a certificate in gardening. Maintain the rose garden of your soul in the month of Shawwal with those gardening tips you learned in Ramadan.

Allah (SWT) is the Most Merciful, and He loves His servants who act righteously. Again and again, Allah (SWT) provides us with opportunities to do the good. Be careful with these opportunities. When they occur, we must not allow them to simply pass us by. We should seize them in order to attract the forgiveness and mercy of Allah (SWT).

One such opportunity Allah (SWT) has bestowed on us consists in the voluntary fasting after Ramadan, during the month of Shawwal. The fasting on these days springs from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (peace be upon him). Of course, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is the most loved of the creations of Allah (SWT) and we should take him as our first example. After all, he is *our* Prophet!

On the authority of Abu Ayyub (may Allah be pleased with him), it was reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:
"**Whoever fasts Ramadan, then follows them with six [voluntary] days of [fasting] Shawwal, it is as if he fasted for all time.**" (Muslim)

Subhan'Allah, what an enormous opportunity this is. Moreover, Allah (SWT) says in a *Hadith Qudsi*:
"Every action is a* kaffarah *(expiation), and the fast is for Me, I reward for it." *(Bukhari)*

Allah (SWT) rewards our fasting and may multiply the reward as many times as He wills.

Some Muslim scholars have explained this Hadith by quoting the *ayah*, **"Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgment] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit]"** (*Al An'am: 160*).

The month of Ramadan is equivalent to ten months, and six days of Shawwal are equivalent to 60 days, or two months. So together they make up twelve months—that's one whole year. Therefore, if one fasts in Ramadan and the six voluntary days of Shawwal, it is as if one fasted for the entire year. Now isn't that covering the entire year ... well, *fast?* And Allah is The Knowing, The Wise.

Although one may fast these six days at any time during the month of Shawwal, Imam An-Nawawi preferred to fast the days consecutively, following the day of Eid.

Fasting overflows with benefits for the believer. When Allah (SWT) commanded us to fast, He said: **"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous"** (*Al-Baqarah: 183*). Fasting gives a lesson to the *nafs*, or self. Ideally the *nafs* will learn good habits and reach higher levels of purity and *taqwa*. Self-restraint in the fasting person grows because through fasting one denies oneself one's desires of food, drink, and sexual pleasure. As food and drink provide nutrients to the body, fasting provides nutrients to the soul.

Therefore, we must take this blessed opportunity that Allah (SWT) has provided for us, to fast the six days of Shawwal and earn, by the will of Allah (SWT), the reward of fasting for all time. We must try to overcome the temptations of the *nafs* and of the world, and do the deeds that will be most beneficial to us on the Day of Judgment.

We pray to Allah (SWT) that He gives us and you the strength and the will to fast these six days and to continue to act righteously, seeking only the pleasure and forgiveness of our Lord.

Muslim Students' Association (St. George), U of T, Archives

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of the heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained." [Bukhari]

The Night of Qadr

Importance:

"Verily we have revealed this Qur'an during the night of Qadr. Have you any knowledge of the importance of the night of Qadr? The night of Qadr is better than a thousand months. Therein descend the angels and the Spirit (Angel Gabriel, on him be peace) by Allah's permission on every errand. It is the night of peace until dawn" (Surah Al-Qadr).

It has been narrated by Anas *(radi'Allahu 'anhu)* that the holy Prophet (SAWS) had said: " A month comes upon you in which there is a night amongst one of it's nights that is better than a thousand months. Whoever misses such a night has indeed been deprived of all that is good. And none is deprived of it, except he who is really misfortunate" (Ibn Majah #1634)

When?

Aisha *(radi'Allahu 'anha)* reports that the beloved Prophet Muhammad *(sallAllahu alaihi wasallam)* said: "Seek the night of Qadr among the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan." (Bukhari #1878)

Ubaadan bin Saamit *(radi'Allahu 'anhu)* reports that he asked the Holy Prophet *(sallAllahu alaihi wasallam)* about the night of Qadr. The Holy Prophet *(sallAllahu alaihi wasallam)* replied: It is among the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan, either the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th,29th, or the last night of Ramadan. Whoever stands in worship during this night, believing in Allah and hoping for a good return will be absolved of his previous sins. (Musnad Ahmed #21702)

Signs

Ubaadan bin Saamit *(radi'Allahu 'anhu)* reports that the Holy Prophet *(sallAllahu alaihi wasallam)* had said, "Among the signs of this night is that it is a serene, quiet night, neither hot nor cold, but temperature as if the moon is shining clear. No meteors are shot at the shayateen on this night. Another sign is that the sun rises without any radiant beams of light, making it appear like the full moon. On this day, Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) prohibits the shayateen from rising with the sun." (Musnad Ahmed #21702)

Note: The Night of Qadr is also known as Lailatul-Qadr, or The Night of Power.

Muslim Students' Association (St. George), U of T, Archives

Endnotes (from p.22) - "Wanna get Married BUT.."

[1] Islamically, a married woman needs her husband's permission to seek employment unless it was agreed upon at the time of marriage. The reason behind securing the husband's consent is that Islam regards the woman's role in society as a wife and mother first and foremost.

[2] MTM-net is a Metro Toronto Muslim Network e-mail listserve. <MTM-NET@LISTSERV.UTORONTO.CA>

The bibliographical information for the article is:

Wente, Margaret, "Women, get ready to serve your country!," Globe and Mail, July 19, 2001:A17.

[3] Conway, John. The Canadian Family in Crisis. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 1997,p 80.

[4] The Ambition is an educational journal dedicated to fostering awareness of Islam.

The bibliographical information for the article is:

Valiante, Wahida, "Challenges Facing Muslim Families in North America," The Ambition, vol. 11, no. 4 (July 2001):1,10.p.10

[5] Adhami, Abdullah. "Gender Relations in the Islamic Tradition." Ajax: Ihya Productions, 1999.

Audiotapes.

[6] Badawi, Jamal. Gender Equity in Islam. Plainfield: American Trust Publications, 1995.

Online: www.jannah.org/genderequity/

[7] It is in the Western patriarchal family model that women gave up their maiden names upon marriage.

Traditionally, Muslim women have kept their maiden names after marriage, which was also an indication of their independent property rights as legal entities.

Zakiyah bint Muhammad

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "Whoever established prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." [Bukhari]

An Extract from a Diary

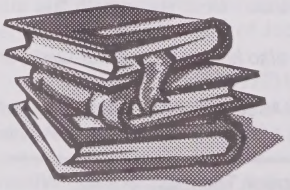
Last Night in Lahore (Pakistan)

Hi Nazia- I don't know but I think it has been a week since I have emailed or chatted with you. Tonight is my last of 3 nights in Lahore after our vacation up north. It has been eventful, very enlightening - I met Sana, (I'm not sure if you remember her from Riyadh, she came over once with her four cousins and we all bonded, went swimming, played charades!). Well Sana has become extremely *deendaar* (religious). She has not only started to read a lot and attend lectures and classes, but she has internalized all the things she has learned in many aspects of her life. *Masha'Allah*, I have never seen such immediate implementation before. I mean Nazia; she had started this journey just like all of us, back in the Riyadh days. She began by covering her head. Then I heard she has started wearing a *jilbab (*outer covering) over her clothes, when she went outside. She explained it to me as "*hijab* of the clothes". Just lately, she has started boycotting co-ed class outings as she is observing "*hijab* of the voice". I admit I'm highly impressed with her, but that is not why I am documenting all this so fervently. Rather, she is trying to work at improving her *deen* in all the places she can, and she continues this by forever seeking knowledge and instruction. On the other hand there is us, even in the areas where we can improve, we are lax. Furthermore, we resist new information, for fear that we will then be obliged to implement it. We say "What of the world? Individuals we are, and hence we shall be!"

Nazia, I met Sana's cousin yesterday, an older one, whom I had seen in Riyadh when she came ages ago. We went to meet her at her mother-in-law's house. The latter had never met me before, so it startled me [illegible]at when I walked in she exclaimed, "So, you are Assra?!" Apparently she had heard a lot about me, since I was a child of 12, when I had started wearing the *hijab*. She said she, without knowing me, used to pray that my *imaan* (faith) would remain strong. Next came her daughter-in-law, who narrated to me a story I had never heard before. She told me that when we were young girls, Sana had been inspired by me to begin weaering the hijab. Then living with her, she gathered the courage to attempt *hijab* herself. With both of them around, one other cousin of theirs also started. Nazia, it was the most humbling thing. An adult, several years my senior was telling me to my face that one of greatest steps she had taken in the line of her faith had been indirectly compelled by my *hijab*. Obviously my mother was silently trying to point this out to me.

But what was actually stirring in my mind was how little we realize the effects of our actions. And hence how we have no actual concept of the responsibility of actions that rests upon our shoulders. This one brief incident made me realize, no matter how much I have strayed from the path or doubted my strength, outwardly I have maintained something, hollow or otherwise, which has managed to encourage good in various others. Often, I've felt that my *Hijab* is incomplete because it is lacking in some ways. But then I think that I must keep trying and not give up, because I at least attempt to perfect it. The domino effect that my unconscious influence had was seriously touching. Nazia, it was extremely humbling - unknowingly one can touch so many, just slightly, yet make the biggest of differences.

Anonymous



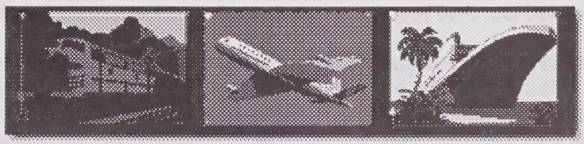
Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Apostle saying regarding Ramadan, "Whoever prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadan) out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." [Bukhari]

Journey to Islam

Amazed By The Beauty

By Colonel Donald S. Rockwell

The simplicity of Islam, the powerful appeal and the compelling atmosphere of its mosques, the earnestness of its faithful adherents, the confidence inspiring realization of the millions throughout the world who answer the five daily calls to prayer — these factors attracted me from the first. But after I had determined to become a follower of Islam, I found many deeper reasons for confirming my decision. The mellow concept of life — fruit of the Prophet's combined course of action and contemplation — the wise counsel, the admonitions to charity and mercy, the broad humanitarianism, the pioneer declaration of woman's property rights - these and other factors of the teachings of the man of Mecca were to me among the most obvious evidence of a practical religion so tersely and so aptly epitomized in the cryptic words of Muhammad, "Trust in God and tie your camel". He gave us a religious system of normal action, not blind faith in the protection of an unseen force in spite of our own neglect, but confidence that if we do all things rightly and to the best of our ability, we may trust in what comes as the Will of God.



The broadminded tolerance of Islam for other religions recommends it to all lovers of liberty. Muhammad admonished his followers to treat well the believers in the Old and New Testaments; and Abraham, Moses and Jesus are acknowledged as prophets of the One God. Surely this is generous and far in advance of the attitude of other religions. The total freedom from idolatry ... is a sign of the salubrious strength and purity of the Muslim faith.

The original teachings of the Prophet of God have not been engulfed in the maze of changes and additions of doctrinarians. The Qur'an remains as it came to the corrupt polytheistic people of Muhammad's time, changeless.

Moderation and temperance in all things, the keynotes of Islam, won my unqualified approbation. The health of his people was cherished by the Prophet, who enjoined them to observe strict cleanliness and specified fasts and to subordinate carnal appetites ... when I stood in the inspiring mosques of Istanbul, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, Algiers, Tangier, Fez and other cities, I was conscious of a powerful reaction [to] the potent uplift of Islam's simple appeal to the sense of higher things, unaided by elaborate trappings, ornamentations, figures, pictures, music and ceremonial ritual. The mosque is a place of quiet contemplation and self-effacement in the greater reality of the One God.

The democracy of Islam has always appealed to me. Potentate and pauper have the same rights on the floor of the mosque, on their knees in humble worship. There are no rented pews nor special reserved seats.

The Muslim accepts no man as a mediator between himself and his God. He goes direct to the invisible source of creation and life, God, without reliance on saving formula of repentance of sins and belief in the power of a teacher to afford him salvation.

The universal brotherhood of Islam, regardless of race, politics, color or country, has been brought home to me most keenly many times in my life and this is another feature which drew me towards the Faith.

Courtesy: *www.islam-online.net*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The TMV Staff wishes all its readers a blessed Ramadan and a wonderful Eid!

The MSA/TMV office is now in full use.
Where: 21 Sussex Ave (Huron and Sussex, behind Robarts), Rm. 405 (New prayer space, Rm 508)

OFFICE HOURS: To Be Announced (Visit the office for further information)

CALLING ALL WRITERS!!

'The Independent' is featuring a backpage section dedicated to Islam and Muslim culture in its January issue. All writers are invited to submit their work to: tmv@post.com. Be sure to mention 'The Independent' in your e-mail.

TMV IS LOOKING FOR ADVERTISING TEAM MEMBERS!

TMV is putting together an advertising/marketing team in charge of marketing our publication to potential advertisers. We need members who have good marketing skills, and are persuasive and committed (preferably experienced). All those interested, please contact our advertising manager, Fatima Butt, at: tropicalsnowdrop@yahoo.com.

Wanna get Married BUT...

An imaginary discourse between brothers and sisters on a chat line for young muslims ...

Traditionalist Male: Assalamu alaikum
Modernist Male: Wa alaikumussalam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu
Traditionalist Male: How r u br?
Modernist Male: Alhumdulillah. Yourself?
Traditionalist Male: Alhumdulillah. Alright i guess. . .
Modernist Male: Sounds like something is on your mind.
Traditionalist Male: Well yeah...I don't understand the srs. *(Modernist Female signs in).*
U see br, I wanna get married...But every sr I meet wants to work after marriage...I don't understand.
Modernist Male: I gather u scare them away!
Traditionalist Male: It's not funny! I want someone who understands and stays @ hm – u know, someone who'll look after the family.
Modernist Female: Assalamu alaikum.*(Traditionalist Female signs in).*
Well, u see brs, I wanna get married too. And yes, everytime I bring up work as part of the marriage contract[1], I scare them away.
Traditionalist Female: Assalamu alaikum everyone. I gather sr that brs find your independence intimidating or a threat to their masc.J
Traditionalist Male: It's not about intimidation.
Modernist Female: Ahmmm...
Traditionalist Male: No really. Did you see the article posted on MTM-Net? – "Women Get Ready to Serve Your Country"[2]
Modernist Female: No.
Traditionalist Male: Well, Canadian women r underproducing – i have the article in front of me – 1.48 kids & not because Canadians can't afford to have more kids but 'cause the independence urge, the career urge and the shopping urge r stronger than the maternal urge. i think the new family forms r incapable of renewing the population. i have more info-
Modernist Male: Ok br. No more stats!
Modernist Female: No, let him talk. Go on.
Traditionalist Male: JAK sr. And who cares for the kids if both parents work? Latchkey kids r more likely to engage in serious misadventurous behaviours.[3]
Modernist Female: I'm sure u can find someone to look after them.
Traditionalist Male: But sr, would u trust anyone else with your children??? They need U!! the mother! Take a look @ this- Did u read the article in The Ambition about challenges facing Muslim families in N. America?[4]
Modernist Female: No.
Traditionalist Female: Yes.
Modernist Male: Yo br, r u specializing in family studies/something?
Traditionalist Male: Straight from the article that I have before me – "the social environment of daycare is predisposing to producing conformity through the process of socialization and leaves very little room for developing an independent religious or social identity." This ain't written by any Shezad/Shabana off the st. It's by Wahida Valiante, a psychotherapist specializing in Family Counseling.
Traditionalist Female: I've always wanted to stay hm with my children and family.
Traditionalist Male: Good for u sr. Masha'Allah.
Modernist Female: Don't tell me br traditionalist that you're one of those brs who couldn't bear an 'overeducated' wife.
Traditionalist Male: On the contrary. I want someone who can think for herself. She's going to be the first madrasah for my children isn't she?
Modernist Female: Ok. My turn. I have a few pts I'd like to make.
Modernist Male: Ooooooooohhh...
Traditionalist Male: Shhh br. By all means sr modernist. Go right ahead.
Modernist Female: U applauded sr traditionalist. But don't tell me a woman belongs within the 4 corners of the house, secluded from the world, like a precious gem.
Traditionalist Male: Never said that.
Modernist Male: Br don't u know your manners yet?! Don't interrupt and let the sr speak.
Modernist Female: Have u listened to Shaikh Adhami's tapes on Gender Relations?
Traditionalist Male: No.
Modernist Male: Yes.

Modernist Female: They r excellent, masha'Allah. I have my notes right here – He says that it's not about where a woman belongs. Bcuz then u ask, where does a man belong? The Prophet (pbuh) condemned the men for sitting & chatting in the st. He (pbuh) emphasized going hm – to the men. There's more-
Traditionalist Female: Masha'Allah sr. U specializing in this stuff/something?
Modernist Female: Did u know that the total seclusion of women is alien to the prophetic period, although we see it today in some "Muslim" cultures. Women participated in acts of worship with men, they learned & taught, they discussed public issues, participated in choosing rulers, in making laws and even in the battlefield when necessary. It's online – Dr Jamal Badawi's Gender Equity in Islam.[6]
Traditionalist Female: I'm impressed sr! Masha'Allah.
Modernist Female: Gotta learn your rights sr. Br traditionalist, just cuz your wife looks after the home and children doesn't mean u can disappear from the scene.
Traditionalist Female: I don't think he'll interrupt. Sorry sr but he never said he wouldn't play a role within the hm.
Modernist Female: I'm just getting carried away. Forgive me br traditionalist. But I'm just very upset @ many brs L There r too many of them that won't lift a plate or wash a spoon. The Prophet (pbuh), who was the leader of the Muslim community & had so much work to do, did chores around the house.
Modernist Male: I wash dishes! I even do the laundry sometimes & dust & mop. Not to brag or anything. Doing good – serving humanity is serving Allah (swt). I start in the hm.
Modernist Female: Good 4 u br. Masha'Allah.
Modernist Male: I figure my wife & i will work things out. She'll ask me & we'll decide together depending on circumstances. But I gotta admit, nowhere in the Qur'an and Sunnah are women explicitly forbidden to seek employment. Umar (RA) appointed a woman as the marketplace supervisor. And Umm Salamah, a wife of the Prophet (pbuh), was the chief advisor of the head of state in the incident of al-Hudaybiyah. I've read Gender Equity in Islam as well. Masha'Allah, excellent work.
Traditionalist Female: But I don't really wanna go to work. And I'm not lazy. Really. At least i don't think i am.
Modernist Female: Nobody said u were!
Traditionalist Female: I mean, insha'Allah I'd help my husband out. It is consistent with mutual love. If our financial situation requires that I go to work, I might have to go. Honestly though, I don't think I could juggle everything.
Modernist Female: I know how u feel sr.
Traditionalist Female: U do?
Modernist Female: Sure i do. It's just a personal thing – I want the choice to work to be there, that's all. I guess I'm afraid of ending up with some oppressive tyrant who thinks he owns me and wants to control me. I can't help it. I'd probably rebel. Except for the intimacy, he doesn't own me, and I don't own him. I am me!!!!
Modernist Male: Guess you're keeping your maiden name?
Modernist Female: Probably. I'm also afraid I'll start feeling isolated & like I haven't achieved anything. I have noble dreams too you know. Insha'Allah, I'll never put my dreams above my family's needs. But no need to kill them. My dreams r a part of me & partly make up who I am. You kill them & a part of me dies with them.
Traditionalist Male: I'm not a male chauvinist.
Modernist Female: I never said u were. I respect u br. I'm just afraid that's all. Surely, u can understand that.
Traditionalist Male: Yes. i guess I'm just afraid too. Maybe a lot of us r. i guess nobody really knows how things will turn out. Put your trust in Allah (swt). You gotta trust Allah (swt) enuff that He (swt) will take care of u. He (swt) did create u and He (swt) is The Guardian, The Protector. The bk is already written & the ink is dry.
Modernist Female: Yes...I'm not a feminist u know. i hope not anyway.
Traditionalist Male: I never said u were. I respect u sr.
Modernist Male: Newayz ppl, nice chatting but it's almost time for Maghrib. I'm out. Salaamz.

(Modernist Male signs out).

Modernist Female: It has been an awesome discussion, alhumdulillah. May Allah (swt) work things out for u re marriage.
Traditionalist Male: Ameen & the same for u both. Assalamu alaikum.

(Traditionalist Male signs out).

Modernist Female: Khuda Hafiz my sr & remember me in your duas.
Traditionalist Female: & me. Fi Aman Allah.

(Modernist Female and Traditionalist Female sign out).

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts); verily in that are signs for those who reflect."
(Qur'an 30:21)

ENDNOTES – See p.19

RECIPES

Mexican Fried Chicken

Add a little Mexican flavor to your Iftaar table!

Ingredients:

1 clove garlic
1½ tsp. Salt
2½ to 3 lb. broiler fried chicken cut up
¼ cup lime juice
1 small onion, finely chopped
Vegetable oil (for frying)
½ cup all purpose flour
1 tsp. chili powder

Directions:

1. Mash garlic and ½ tsp. salt to paste.
2. Rub chicken with garlic mixture.
3. Arrange chicken in shallow dish.
4. Sprinkle with lime juice and onion, then cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours, turning occasionally.
5. Remove chicken from marinade; pat dry.
6. Heat oil (1/4 inch) in skillet until hot. Decrease heat to medium.
7. Mix flour, 1 tsp. salt and the chili powder.
8. Coat the chicken with flour mixture.
9. Place chicken in skillet skin sides down.
10. Cover and cook for 5 minutes.
11. Uncover and cook for 15 minutes.
12. Turn chicken, cover and cook for 5 more min.
13. Uncover and cook until thickest pieces are done– about 10 to 15 minutes.
14. Drain on paper towels.
15. Enjoy!

Asma Ahmad

Chiffon Cake

Ingredients:

1 ¾ cup flour
½ cup cocoa
1 ¾ cup sugar
3 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
½ cup oil
1 tsp vanilla essence
¾ cup boiling water
7 unbeaten yolks
7 egg whites
½ tsp cream of tartar

Directions:

Sift the first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Take another bowl and mix together in this bowl the next 4 ingredients. After mixing, add the contents of the second bowl to the first. Mix the batter well together. In another container, whisk the 7 egg whites & ½ tsp cream of tartar until very stiff. Fold stiff egg whites into above mixture. Pour into 12" pan. Bake at 350°F.

Note: If you want it to be a plain cake, replace cocoa with the same amount of cornstarch.

Basic Icing

Ingredients:

100 g soft butter
250 g icing sugar
10 ml vanilla essence
About 25ml milk

Directions:

Beat the above ingredients well. Add enough milk to make mixture light and creamy.

Shireen P.

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: The Prophet was the most generous amongst the people, and he used to be more so in the month of Ramadan when Gabriel visited him, and Gabriel used to meet him on every night of Ramadan till the end of the month. The Prophet used to recite the Holy Qur'an to Gabriel, and when Gabriel met him, he used to be more generous than a fast wind (which causes rain and welfare). [Bukhari]

RECIPES

Pecan Cream Cheese Pie

Use: Pie dish (2" deep, approximately 9-10 inches round)– grease with oil.

1. Pastry Base:
   - 125 grams butter-soft (not from fridge)
   - 7 tablespoons sugar
   - 2 tablespoons milk
   - 250 grams flour
   - a pinch of salt

Mix the first 3 ingredients until smooth. Add the next 2 ingredients to the butter mixture. Make a soft, but not sticky dough. Roll out to fit pie dish. Bake 10 minutes only. Set aside.

2. Cheesecake Filling:
   - 500 grams (2 packets Philadelphia) cream cheese
   - 4 tablespoons sugar
   - 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
   - 1 egg

Mix all four ingredients and pour into the warm pie shell.

3. Pecan Topping: *
   - ¾ cup golden syrup (or treacle or honey)
   - 3 eggs
   - 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

Mix the above ingredients.

4. Nuts:
   - 200 grams pecans (chop 125 grams fine, leave 75 grams whole)

Sprinkle fine pecans over cheese mixture. Arrange whole pecans in an attractive pattern. Gently pour syrup mixture over nuts. Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 40-45 minutes or until firm.

Serve at room temperature, or with whipped cream.

***Note**: For syrup I used Lyles Golden Syrup available at A&P. Honey will give a different flavour.
Treacle will make the top darker.

Shireen P.

For more recipes, check out:
http://www.eat-halal.com/recipes.htm

Banana Bread

Ingredients:

414g flour
157g sugar
9.8ml baking powder
1.2ml baking soda
78.9ml butter/margarine, softened
2 eggs
118g nuts/chocolate chips
250g bananas (1 cup)
2.5g salt

Directions:

Preheat oven to 175 degrees C (350 degrees F)
Mash bananas
Mix everything together until it is well blended.
Pour into a greased (bottom only) loaf pan (8x3x2 inches or thereabouts)
Bake in oven for 1 hr or until an object inserted in the centre comes out clean.

Aneesa Patel

Cholay

Ingredients:

Chickpeas: 250 grams (soaked overnight and boiled until tender to the touch)
Salt: 1 tsp.
Red chillies: ½ tsp.
Chat masala: 2 tsp.
Tamarind pulp: ¼ cup
1 onion, 1 tomato, and some sliced green chillies

Directions:

Put chickpeas and spices in a pot and cook for a while until they blend. In the end, add onion, tomatoes and green chillies. A variation is to add sugar and yoghurt as well.

Farah I. Khan

Entertainment

Brain Teasers

Q.1 You are a bus driver. At the first stop of the day, eight people get on board. At the second stop, four get off, and eleven get on. At the third stop, two get off, and six get on. At the fourth stop, thirteen get off, and one gets on. At the fifth stop, five get off, and three get on. At the sixth stop, three get off, and two get on. What colour are the bus driver's eyes?

Q.2 An electric train is traveling northwest at 95 miles per hour, and the wind is blowing southwest at 95 miles per hour. In which direction does the smoke blow?

Q.3 Some months have 30 days. Some months have 31 days. How many months have 28 days?

Q.4 Forward I'm heavy, backwards I'm not. What am I?

Q.5 What two words have the most letters in them?

Q.6 How many birthdays does the average man have?

Q.7 If you had one match and entered a room in which there were a kerosene lamp, an oil burner, and a wood burning stove, which would you light first?

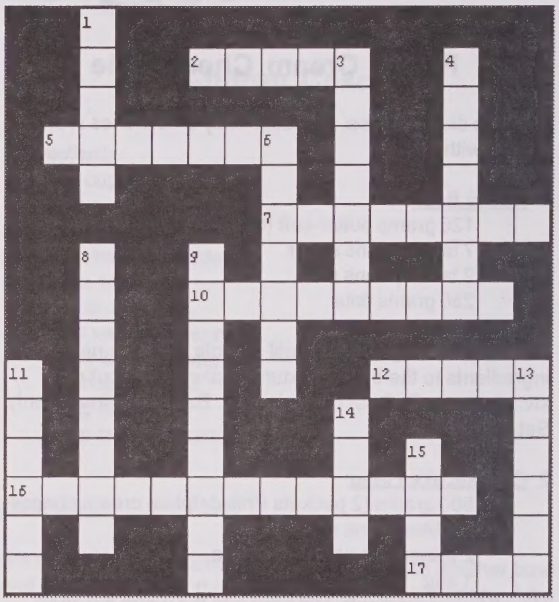
Q.8 Divide 30 by 1/2 and add 10. What is the answer?

Q.9 How many animals of each gender did Moses take aboard the ark?

Q.10 If eggs can be laid at the rate of eight every seven days, how many can a rooster lay in sixteen days?

Q.11 A man is looking at a photograph of someone. His friend asks who it is. The man replies, "Brothers and sisters, I have none. But that man's father is my father's son." Who was in the photograph?

Q.12 Punctuate the following so it makes sense:
"That that is is that that is not is not is not that it it is."



Across:
2. The first woman created by Allah (subhana wa ta'ala).
5. The shortest surah in the Holy Quran.
7. The first month of the Islamic calendar.
10. One of the two festivals of Islam.
12. To break one's fast with these is sunnah.
16. Judgement Day (arabic).
17. The third pillar of Islam.

Down:
1. The seventh month of the Islamic calendar.
3. Islam forbids the consumption of this.
4. The second surah of the Holy Quran.
11. The only woman whose name is mentioned in the Holy Quran.
8. Late night prayers.
9. The third holiest city for Muslims.
14. The first man created by Allah (subhana wa ta'ala).
15. The last surah of the Holy Quran.
13. The Islamic greeting.
6. Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of this month.

SOLUTIONS

1)Whatever colour yours are. You're the bus driver.
2)There isn't any smoke. It's an electric train.
3)All of them.
4)A ton.
5)Post Office.
6)One.
7)The match.
8)70. (30 divided by 2 is 15, but 30 divided by 1/2 is 60.)
9)None. Noah was the one with the ark.
10)None. Roosters do not lay eggs.
11)His son.
12)"That that is, is; that that is not, is not; is not that it? It is."

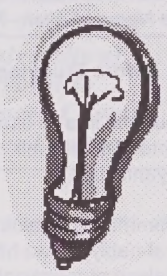
Source: http://puzzles.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm

Entertainment

Words to find:

RAMADAN
SHAWWAL
EIDULFITR
FASTING
SUHOOR
TAHAJJUD
TARAWEEH
ZAKAH
DATES
SUNNAH
LAYLATULQADR
SHABAN
EIDALADHA
HIJAB
SALAAM
HADITH
JANNAH
IFTAR
HELL-FIRE

M	S	A	C	P	Q	K	T	U	C	F	Z	J	D	Y	H	A	D	E	E
C	S	H	W	W	C	F	E	J	Q	Z	E	H	T	H	Y	M	Y	J	G
A	S	N	X	V	H	A	N	N	U	S	A	Z	X	Z	H	T	C	V	O
C	D	H	K	U	S	H	A	B	A	N	R	P	L	N	S	W	P	B	J
T	X	X	E	M	Z	D	S	I	N	F	O	N	M	Q	X	K	V	A	K
R	A	W	X	M	A	A	L	A	S	Y	O	P	H	F	J	T	T	U	H
N	N	R	U	M	K	L	J	D	F	Z	H	B	Z	D	U	M	T	C	I
N	S	M	A	R	A	A	A	K	W	A	U	V	F	N	U	F	U	T	N
U	I	R	K	W	H	D	Q	Y	K	Z	S	S	E	L	O	I	S	K	T
C	N	R	W	U	E	I	D	U	L	F	I	T	R	N	R	D	E	S	T
U	Y	A	L	S	M	E	J	F	T	A	F	L	I	J	Q	U	M	H	F
R	H	J	N	F	Y	H	H	A	D	I	T	H	F	N	V	J	U	S	G
S	C	A	Q	I	M	W	W	P	B	W	A	U	-	Y	G	D	M	J	R
B	C	B	A	D	A	P	P	D	L	T	R	Q	L	O	F	P	Y	V	Z
C	T	N	M	P	C	D	I	X	K	L	V	A	L	Q	D	H	M	P	F
N	G	D	M	K	P	A	C	A	Y	Q	P	Y	E	O	A	A	E	T	K
O	H	F	I	Z	H	V	P	D	U	J	J	A	H	A	T	D	A	M	L
R	H	J	S	F	O	T	C	H	M	Z	L	H	E	T	E	Z	R	G	H
S	Z	M	E	Q	X	V	V	D	U	L	B	A	S	O	S	W	E	X	P
S	W	E	V	B	O	W	F	H	F	E	E	L	Q	X	U	N	V	Q	X



Courtesy: ArabNews.com In case this sends out the wrong message, this is not the way fasting should be performed.

Study Du'as

Bismillah irRahman irRaheem
In the Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Du'a Before Studying

Allahumma infa'nii bimaa 'allamtanii wa'allimnii maa yanfa' unii.	O Allah! Make useful for me what You taught me and teach me knowledge that will be useful to me.
Allahumma inii as'aluka fahmal-nabiyyen wa hifthal mursaleen al-muqarrabeen.	O Allah! I ask You for the understanding of the prophets and the memory of the messengers, and those nearest to You.
Allahumma ijal leesanee 'amiran bi thikrika wa qalbi bi khashyatika.	O Allah! Make my tongue full of Your remembrance, and my heart with consciousness of You.
Innaka 'ala ma-tasha'-u qadeer wa anta hasbun-allahu wa na'mal wakeel.	(O Allah!) You do whatever You wish, and You are my Availer and Protector and the best of aid.

Du'a After Studying

Allahhumma inni astaodeeuka ma qara'tu wama hafaz-tu.	O Allah! I entrust You with what I have read and I have studied.
Faradduhu 'allaya inda hagati elayhi.	(O Allah!) Bring it back to me when I am in need of it.
Innaka 'ala ma-tasha'-u qadeer wa anta hasbeeya wa na'mal wakeel.	(O Allah!) You do whatever You wish, and You are my Availer and Protector and the best of aid.

Du'a While Studying Something Difficult

Allahumma la sahla illama ja-'altahu sahla wa anta taj 'alu al hazana etha shi'ta sahla	O Allah! Nothing is easy except what You have made easy. If You wish, You can make the difficult easy.

Du'a for Anxiety

Allahumma inni a'oodhoo bika minal-hammi walhuzni, wal-'ajzi wal-kasali wal-bukhli wal-jubni, wa dal'id-dayni wa ghalabatir-rajaal	O Allah! I seek refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, weakness and laziness, miserliness and cowardice, the burden of debts and from being oppressed by men.

Du'a for Distress

Allahumma rahmataka arjoo falaa takilnee ilaa nafsee tarfata 'aynin wa aslih-lee sha'nee kullahu, laa ilaha illa anta	O Allah! It is Your mercy that I hope for so do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye and rectify for me all of my affairs. None has the right to be worshipped except You.

Terms You Might Come Across in TMV

SAW - SallAllahu alaihi wasallam
This phrase translates into 'Peace & Blessings of God be Upon Him'. It is used when the name of the Prophet Muhammad is mentioned.

SWT - Subhanahu wa ta'ala
This is an expression that Muslims use whenever the name of Allah is pronounced or written. The meaning of this expression is: "Allah is pure of having partners and He is exalted from having a son."

Insha'Allah
When a person wishes to plan for the future, when he promises, and when he makes a pledge, he makes them with permission and the will of Allah. For this reason, a Muslim uses the Qur'anic instructions by saying "In Sha 'Allah." The meaning of this statement is: "If Allah wills."

Alhumdulillah
All Praise is Due to Allah (SWT)

Subhan'Allah
Glory be to God

Masha'Allah
God has willed it. Said specifically in praise of something good.

Assalam Alaikum
This is an expression Muslims say whenever they meet one another. It is a statement of greeting with peace. The meaning of it is: "Peace be upon you."

Qur'an
The holy book of Muslims is called the Qur'an. It was revealed unto Muhammad (SAWS) from Allah through angel Gabriel (Jibril) for a period of 23 years.

Hadith
Reports on the sayings and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) or what he witnessed and approved are called Hadith.

Taraweeh
Optional prayers offered after the 'Ishaa (night) prayer every night of the holy month of Ramadan.

Du'a
A prayer/supplication.

Radhiallahu 'anhu
This is an expression to be used by Muslims whenever a name of a companion of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) is mentioned. It means: "May Allah be pleased with him."

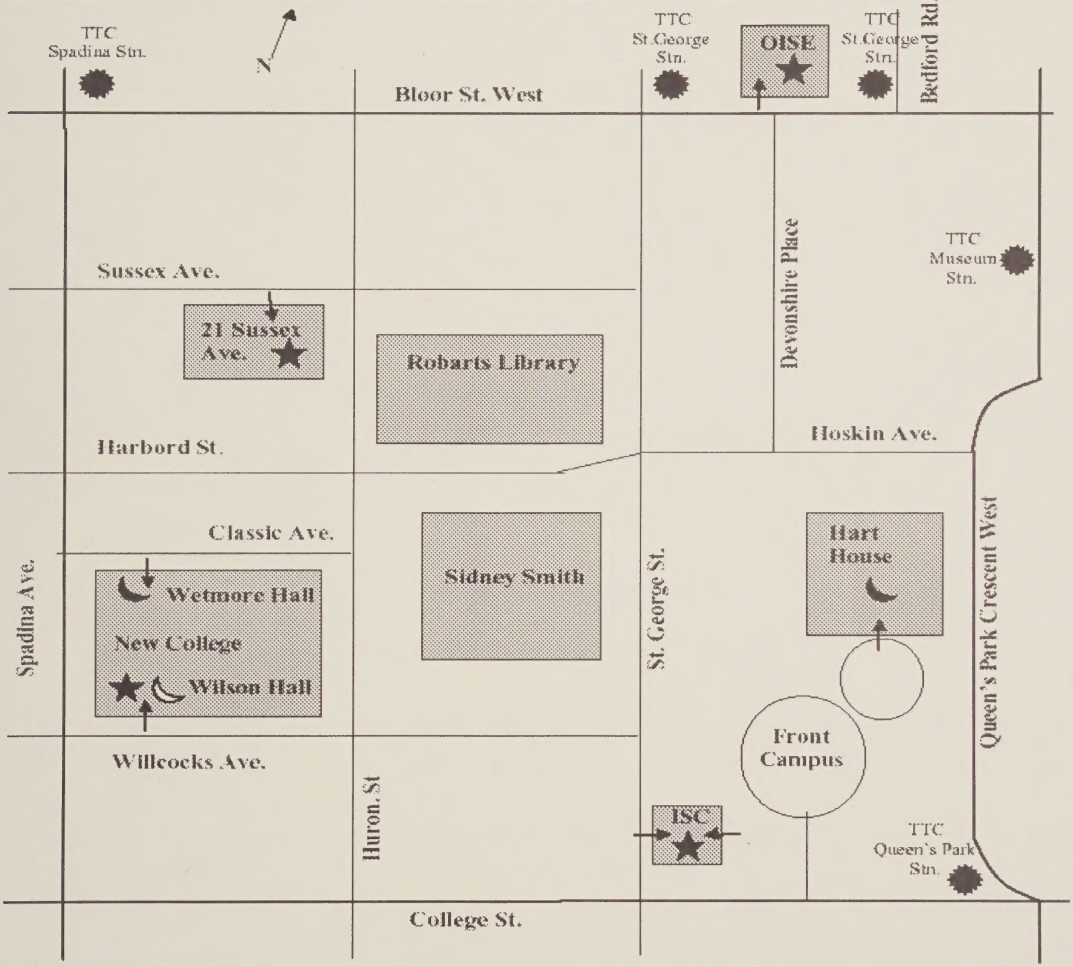
Prayer Space on St. George Campus

University of Toronto St.George Campus Prayer Locations

★ Daily Prayer Locations:
- **ISC** - International Students` Centre, 3rd floor
- **Wilson Hall, New College** - 40 Willcocks St., Basement
- **OISE** - 252 Bloor St.W., 8th floor, room 136
- **21 Sussex Ave.** - 5th floor, room 508

☾ Main Jumuah Prayer Location, 1-2pm *(one of these two locations):*
- **Wetmore Hall, New College** - 300 Huron St., Wetmore Hall
- **Hart House** – 7 Hart House Circle, 2nd floor, Debates Room *(during Fall and Spring session exams, and during the summer. Exact switch date posted on website noted below).*

☾ Alternate Jumuah Prayer Location:
- **Wilson Hall, New College** - 40 Willcocks St., Basement, Prayer room *(check website for times)*



Muslim Students' Association, University of Toronto, St.George Campus
Website: http://www.utoronto.ca/muslim, E-mail: msa_uoft@yahoogroups.com
Hotline: 416-946-7788 (voice mail), Office: 21 Sussex Ave., Suite 405

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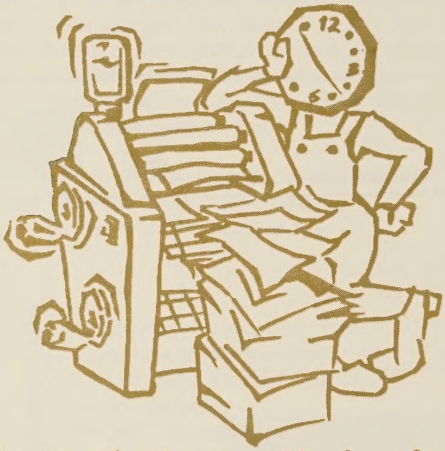

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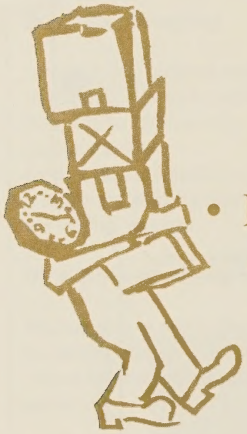

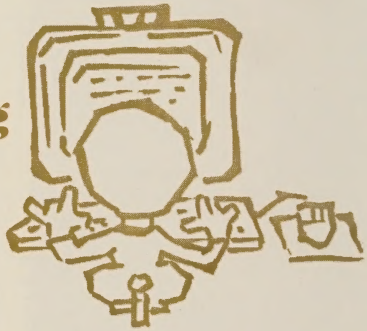

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